

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
March 1, 2001
CLOVIS, CALIFORNIA

The meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority was called to order on March 1, 2001 at 10:15 a.m. at the Center for Advanced Research and Technology at 2555 Clovis Avenue, Clovis, California.

Members Present: Michael E. Tennenbaum, Chairperson
Edward P. Graveline, Vice Chairperson
William E. Leonard
T.J. Stapleton

Members Absent: Dr. Ernest A. Bates
Jerry B. Epstein
John P. Fowler
Ben Hom
Leland Wong

Introductory Remarks

Vice Chairperson Graveline reported on some of the details of the meeting facility and had Mr. Wright of CART comment on CART's activities. Chairperson Tennenbaum announced new members were recently appointed to the Authority and requested Executive Director Morshed give some background information on the two newly appointed members. Executive Director Morshed reported the Senate Rules Committee appointed Mr. Ben Hom, a Chinese-American businessman from San Francisco with a background in real estate and banking. Speaker Hertzberg reappointed T.J. Stapleton and appointed Mr. Leland Wong, a Los Angeles businessman to the Authority. Ms. Donna Andrews was replaced by Mr. Leland Wong and will pursue the possibility of getting appointed to the Authority by the Senate Rules Committee or the Governor. Chairperson Tennenbaum expressed his appreciation of Ms. Donna Andrews' contribution to the Authority.

Members' Report

Vice Chairperson Graveline reported there are two teams of CART students that will be working with EIP & Associates doing some of the actual environmental surveying not covered in the environmental study contract. The students on the CART morning team are Loren Richardson; Nick Andrade; Melisa Byrd and Matt Crenshaw. The students on the CART afternoon team are Anthony Agsavilo; Ricky Singh; Jason Marrott and Tim Graveline. Vice Chairperson Graveline reported while traveling on business, he had the opportunity to investigate the Italian high-speed rail system, riding five different levels of rail service in Italy. Vice Chairperson Graveline stated the Authority should investigate the Italian high-speed rail system, particularly in the area of operations because much of their operational issues are the same type of issues that face California.

Member Leonard reported on his trip to New York and Washington where he met with various dignitaries. Member Leonard reported on his investigation of the Amtrak ACELA train. He reported the great deal of enthusiasm in Washington about the California high-speed train project. Member Leonard also reported on his meeting with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Member Leonard expressed FRA's support of the high-speed rail project in California.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Morshed drew attention to future Authority meeting dates. Executive Director Morshed stated the Authority was going to return to the established policy of meeting on the third Wednesday of every month. The proposed meeting dates will remain tentative until the new members are present and there is a quorum in order to adopt these meetings. The next Authority meeting will be April 18, 2001 and the proposed 2001 meeting schedule will be revisited at that time. Executive Director Morshed reported on the 17 town hall workshops that have been held throughout the state, including the town hall workshop held in Palmdale, February 28th. There will be a final report given by staff at the April Authority meeting. Executive Director Morshed reported he spoke to Mark Yachmetz, Associate Administrator, Railroad Development of FRA. Mr. Yachmetz stated FRA's response letter to the Authority is forthcoming.

Executive Director Morshed reported last Friday was the deadline date for legislation to be introduced in the Legislature. Two pieces of legislation that were introduced relate to the Authority. Senator Costa authored both bills.

- ?? SB 796 - SB1703 follow up to the request that the Secretary of BT&H and Director of CalTrans would serve as ex-officio members of the Authority.
- ?? SB 690 – Is in reference to the Authority and its work. This bill requires that the technology reviewed should be proven in service for at least five years; the cost estimate, safety and other factors be based on actual data; the technology be feasible for incremental improvement of the high-speed train system.

Presentation of the High-Speed Rail Alignment Options

Deputy Director Leavitt reported the project managers of each regional team would present regional high-speed rail alignment options that will be evaluated by the Authority in June. This will not preclude other options that may be added as a result of further public comment from agencies or general public at the Authority's public meetings or scoping meetings. Deputy Director Leavitt introduced the first of the five presenters, Dave Mansen of Parsons Transportation Group. Mr. Mansen presented the alignment options of the Bay Area to Merced corridor. A copy of Mr. Mansen's presentation is available upon request. Al Witzig of Frederic R. Harris, Inc. presented the alignment options of the Sacramento to Bakersfield corridor. A copy of Mr. Witzig's presentation is available upon request. Sylvia Salenius of P & D Consultants presented the alignment options of the Los Angeles to Bakersfield corridor. A copy of Ms. Salenius' presentation is available upon request. Linda Bohlinger of HNTB presented the alignment options of the Los Angeles to San Diego via the Inland Empire corridor. A copy of Ms. Bohlinger's presentation is available upon request. Steve Schibuola of IBI Group presented the alignment options of the Los Angeles-Orange County-San Diego corridor. A copy of Mr. Schibuola's presentation is available upon request.

Public Comment

Steve Niemi, CalTrans District 6

Mr. Niemi stated the map of Fresno in the Sacramento to Bakersfield alignment options presentation did not include the current state of development for State Route 168, 180 and 41. Mr. Niemi requested the Authority consider the Fresno station with these facilities in mind. Mr. Niemi also requested a more direct and faster alternative to LAX to downtown LA along freeway be investigated. Mr. Niemi stated if LAX does not become a station, a light rail link should be provided.

Paul Bartell

Mr. Bartell expressed his support for the Panoche Pass as the preferred alignment to link the Central Valley to the San Francisco Bay Area. Mr. Bartlett pointed out that this pass has been supported by the Fresno region and provides the fastest travel times between Fresno and the Bay Area.

Joan Lipton, League of Women Voters

Ms. Lipton read a letter written by Mary Savala, Co-President of the League of Women Voters of Fresno. The letter applauded planning and investment in alternative modes of transportation. Ms. Savala urged the Authority to give equal consideration to environmental costs as well as the capital investment in a high-speed rail system and give priority to the preservation of Fresno County Farmland.

Werner Lipton

Mr. Lipton stated the stations should be where the people are. Therefore, alignment should be along the established routes through Fresno as close as possible to the SP line. Mr. Lipton expressed his support of the high-speed rail project but urged the Authority to consider the agriculture of the Central Valley. Concerning the Bay Area to Merced corridor, Mr. Lipton expressed his preference of the Panoche Pass vs. Pacheco Pass.

Larry Miller, Journalist

Mr. Miller expressed his concern about the coordination between the Authority and existing entities that deal with passenger rail in the Valley. Mr. Miller suggested the Authority seek to meet with the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee that oversees passenger rail on behalf of Amtrak and CalTrans. Mr. Miller also suggested that the Aqueduct alignment is preferred between Bakersfield and Los Angeles because Amtrak, BNSF & SP may be most interested in that alignment. Executive Director Morshed stated the lack of coordination with the Valley Rail Committee has to do with the functions the different entities perform. San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee is focused on Amtrak and others in the business of providing day-to-day operations of existing passenger train service. The Authority is planning for future train service and is coordinating with the responsible entities for planning within the Central Valley.

Richard Kuan, PEGG – Fresno section

Mr. Kuan requested the Authority work with CalTrans, Central Region, to develop a better and cheaper alignment for the Central Valley. Mr. Kuan stated many segments for the proposed State Route 65 median could be utilized for the mainline of the high-speed rail system.

Presentation of Initial Screening Methods & Criteria

Deputy Director Dan Leavitt introduced Mr. Kip Field, Parsons Brinckerhoff. Mr. Field presented an overview of the initial screening process including methods and criteria to be applied. A copy of Mr. Field's presentation is available upon request.

Presentation of No-Build Alternative and Evaluation Methodology

Deputy Director Dan Leavitt gave an overall description of the no-build alternative and evaluation methodology. Deputy Director Dan Leavitt then introduced Mr. Kip Field, Parsons Brinckerhoff who gave a presentation describing the purpose and content of the "no-build" alternative and the methodology for the development and analyses of system-wide/modal alternatives. A copy of Mr. Field's presentation is available upon request.

Chairperson's Resignation

Chairperson Tennenbaum announced his resignation from the Board. As Chairperson Tennenbaum's investing company continues to experience accelerating growth, avoiding the potential for either actual or perceived conflict of interest has become more burdensome. Therefore, effective March 2, 2001 Chairperson Tennenbaum is going to resign.

Upon Chairperson Tennenbaum's resignation announcement, Member Leonard expressed his appreciation for Chairperson Tennenbaum's contribution to the Authority and read the following resolution:

"WHEREAS the California High-Speed Rail Authority commenced the building of a statewide high-speed train system for the state in August 2001; and,

WHEREAS the Authority believes that a high-speed train system is a smart investment in the state's future mobility, will yield solid financial returns to the state and provide potentially dramatic transportation benefits to all Californians, and can be operated without public subsidy; and,

WHEREAS the Authority believes that the statewide high-speed train system could generate more than \$1 billion in excess revenues per year and that at this level of revenue generation, private sector funding to construct major elements of the system would be both practicable and advisable; and,

WHEREAS Michael E. Tennenbaum, first as a member of the intercity High-Speed Rail Commission from 1994 to 1996, and then as chairman of the California High-Speed Rail Authority from 1998 to 2001, provided a consistent vision of what California could be like with a high-speed train system; and,

WHEREAS Mr. Tennenbaum's tireless pursuit for financially viable high-speed train options that can be constructed and operated to the utmost benefit of Californians today and in the future has inspired his colleagues on the Authority, as well as the Authority staff;

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that on this day, March 1, 2001, the members of the California High-Speed Rail Authority express their deep respect, sincere gratitude, and heartfelt best wishes to Mr. Tennenbaum for his dedication, perseverance, and sacrifice to better the transportation system for all Californians."

Vice Chairperson Graveline presented a plaque to Chairperson Tennenbaum in honor of his outstanding leadership and vision as Chairperson 1998-2001. Executive Director Morshed personally thanked Chairperson Tennenbaum for his leadership, patience, perseverance and his contribution to the Authority. Vice Chairperson Graveline also expressed his appreciation for Chairperson Tennenbaum's involvement and leadership. T.J. Stapleton expressed his mixed feelings about Chairperson Tennenbaum's resignation.

Public Comment

George Gaekle, Rail Passenger Advisor, Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors & CEO

Mr. Gaekle read a statement he read at the High-Speed Rail Forum in Turlock on February 12, 2001. In Mr. Gaekle's statement, he highlights his belief that it makes sense to improve the existing rail corridors incrementally.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.